

State of Connecticut
Department of Children and Families
Psychotropic Medication Advisory Committee

Purpose

The number of psychotropic medications available and the complexities surrounding their safe and effective use make it necessary for organized health-care settings to have a sound program for maximizing rational psychotropic medication use. Issues of rational psychotropic medication use are even more complex in children and adolescents given that the use of many medications is not guided by approved information from the Food and Drug Administration, and use in children is frequently “off-label”. The State of Connecticut has a particular responsibility for children in their care so that decisions regarding medication use are made with the most up to date scientific information and conform to local standards of care. In CT, the Psychotropic Medication Advisory Committee performs these critical functions. The Psychotropic Medication Advisory Committee evaluates the clinical use of psychotropic medications, develops policies for managing psychotropic medication use and psychotropic medication administration, and manages an approved psychotropic medication list. It is a policy-recommending body to DCF on matters related to the therapeutic use of psychotropic medications. Through these functions, the committee ultimately works to ensure the safest psychotropic medication management for DCF involved children.

Composition

This committee is composed of physicians (both psychiatrists experienced in the treatment of children and adolescents and pediatricians), pharmacists (both knowledgeable in administration/regulatory issues and clinical issues), nurses (both RNs and APRNs), administrators, and other members as appropriate selected with the guidance of the DCF Chief of Psychiatry or designee. Parent advocates are encouraged to participate.

Organization

1. The Psychotropic Medication Advisory Committee shall meet at least quarterly and more often when necessary.
2. Attendance will be taken at each meeting.
3. The committee should be organized and operated in a manner that ensures the objectivity and credibility of its recommendations.
4. The committee should invite to its meeting persons within or outside DCF who can contribute specialized or unique knowledge, skills, and judgments.
5. An agenda and supplementary materials (including minutes of the previous meeting) should be submitted to committee members for them to review.
6. The minutes of committee meetings should be prepared by an appointed secretary and maintained in the permanent records of DCF.
7. Actions of the committee should be routinely communicated to the various personnel involved in the care of the children.

Responsibilities

1. To serve in an evaluative, educational, and advisory capacity to the agency administration in matters pertaining to the use of psychotropic medications.
2. To develop recommendations for the safe use of psychotropic medications.
3. To review psychotropic medication prescribing practice and utilization for patients served by DCF.
4. To evaluate and approve protocols and or guidelines concerned with psychotropic medication use.
5. To evaluate clinical data concerning new psychotropic medications.
6. To create and maintain an approved list of safe and effective psychotropic medications for DCF involved children.
7. To develop and maintain an adverse psychotropic medication reaction reporting system.
8. To keep a permanent record of its proceedings, findings, recommendations and actions taken.

Approved October 7, 2011